



Interview by Ahmad Suaedy with Lazuardi, Australia Awards Office, Jakarta, 19 September 2014

MBA, University of Queensland, 2007-2009

Interviewer : Mas Lazuardi, we are starting from your background. You are a social economic political background, your family and...uh, work of your, *apa*, parents, also your family and school.

Lazuardi :Okay. Uh, my name is Lazuardi but people call me Adi. I was born in Banda Aceh.

Interviewer : Okay.

Lazuardi : Uh my parents, um, my daddy is a civil servant, previously he teaches at university as a lecturer, but then he joined the local government. We call it *diklat*.

Interviewer : *Diklat*?

Lazuardi : Mm-hmm. At the provincial level. And he is teaching government officials like in *eselon* two and one level.

Interviewer : In Aceh?

Lazuardi : In Aceh. In Banda Aceh.

Interviewer : In education also?

Lazuardi : Yes. I did my bachelors degree at the University of Syiah Kuala, Banda Aceh. Um... My major was in social economic of agriculture. Uh, after graduating in about 1998, I joined an organization that belong to [the] local government in Banda Aceh, named PDPA, *Perusahaan Daerah Pembangunan Aceh*. That's a local state development enterprise. Um, owned by local government of Banda Aceh.

Interviewer : This is before autonomy, *ya*?

Lazuardi : Yes. And then um, in um, it was about... uh, [a] couple of months after working in that organization and than I continued doing my master degree here in Jakarta. Um, I did [a] magistrate management program, at one of local [the] business institute here in, in Jakarta, IBMI.

Interviewer : IBMI?

Lazuardi : Yes. And then in 2007, I applied for the scholarship, well 2006 actually. And then I joined the pre-departure training for six months. Here at ILF Jakarta and then in January 2007 I commenced my degree at the university of--

Interviewer : 2000 and...?

Lazuardi : 2007.

Interviewer : What university?



Lazuardi : University of Queensland, in Brisbane. I did business administration, and I graduated in 2008, December. So basically I returned to Indonesia in January 2009 to this program. And then, I went back to my previous organization PDPA, but I was assigned to look after the branch office here in Jakarta for a couple of months. And then, then I quit and joined another IT consultant company here in Jakarta for about um, one year.

Interviewer : What kind of, what's the name of the company?

Lazuardi : Um, because of technology this is an IT company.

Interviewer : IT?

Lazuardi : IT.

Interviewer : Oh, IT company.

Lazuardi : IT. It provides IT consultancy for governments and private sectors, basically like a--

Interviewer : So you used to be a civil servant?

Lazuardi : No.

Interviewer : No?

Lazuardi : No.

Interviewer : like contractor? Contract or...?

Lazuardi : PDPA is an organization owned by [the] local government but this is not government employee. I mean this is not civil servant but..

Interviewer : This is the organization or like, *apa, perusahaan* owned by government or..

Lazuardi : Owned by government.

Interviewer: What does it specify in?

Lazuardi : It has a range of a business...business lines, like uh...

Interviewer : Lab?

Lazuardi : Line, including agribusiness projects, infrastructure projects, umm Aceh government airlines, if you remember there is Lawak Air, it was owned by this organization as well, in collaboration with the Malaysian government at that time. It's a bit like a consortium company, belonging to the local government of Aceh.

Interviewer : Back to your history, actually, how did you live in the village, or in the city, how do you get to your school at that time, by bus by bicycle, or something...?



Lazuardi : I live in the city of Banda Aceh.

Interviewer : Okay.

Lazuardi : It is about three kilometers from-- away from the university.

Interviewer : No, no. I mean when you were in senior or junior high school. Not in the university. Before, before, when you were in...

Lazuardi : Yes, um, I went to school by motorbike, as well as sometimes I just take a bus.

Interviewer : How long? How far?

Lazuardi : Far? Umm...it's about thirty minutes away from home. Not that far.

Interviewer : *Ya ya.*

Lazuardi : There was no traffic jam in Banda Aceh. It's about two kilometers maybe but it's only take twenty--

Interviewer : it was in [the] 90's, *ya*?

Lazuardi : Mm-hm.

Interviewer : So, still [#### - audio unclear, 00:07:17]

Lazuardi : Yeah, but that military regulation or something, does not affect the city of Banda Aceh. They focus on the district area in Aceh.

Interviewer : So you feel peaceful, not, no problem with your security and so on..

Lazuardi : Nothing,

Interviewer : What about your family? Are they originally Aceh?

Lazuardi : Yes my mom and dad are from Aceh as well,

Interviewer : What does she work [as]?

Lazuardi : My mom is a housewife. She used to teach at a kindergarten but then she quit. And then just stay home to take care of the kids. My family was a bit affected by GAM, in about um, 2004 or something, before the tsunami.

Interviewer : Okay.

Lazuardi : Because you know GAM is very well, um, they have a good intention to um to give freedom to Aceh actually. But, the way they did it is not, is not that--

Interviewer : Aggressive, *ya*?



Lazuardi : Too aggressive. And, you know because they try to... to...what is it, to rob people, we could say. Um, so , you know, every month we have to give money to them. And if you don't have money, if you don't want to give anything, and you know -- I remember that one time they went to my house. And then they want to take my, my dad's car, and then my dad say, no this is my property. You can't just take this car and get it burned at the, at the um, forest for example. And then they got angry and they put their M-16 and hand-grenades on the table and said 'you love your life or your property?'. And then my mom just cried and then just give it to them. They took my dad's car. And then couple of months after that...

Interviewer : With the license also, uh *apa, surat?*

Lazuardi : No. Only the car and the key. Three months after that, the car was found burned on the hill, with a couple of holes...bullet holes on the door.

Interviewer : Shoot by the.... So what--

Lazuardi : That's what happened. And my uncle also kidnapped by the GAM, my uncle is...he is a Chinese. His wife is a Chinese. All of the family are purely Chinese. But they just [got] kidnapped because, simply because they didn't want to give, you know, each month give the money to the rebellion, and then they just kidnapped [him], and trapped [him] in the mountain or something for about one week. And then the military came to save them, and he is safe now.

Interviewer : But uh, GAM actually do not consider that your family is an enemy, actually not politically, no *ya* but this is because robbery or something like that...

Lazuardi : They told that taking money from the um... from the citizen just to -- for the..you know, for the development or something, but in fact the way they did it is not that good actually.

Interviewer : But you yourself have no problem? Never had problems from GAM or something? You you..

Lazuardi : No no no.

Interviewer : How many, how many sisters and brothers do you--

Lazuardi : I have four brothers, I have no sisters.

Interviewer : Please talk, tell me about...

Lazuardi : I'm the second child of this family. My older brother... um, he is working for a private organization here in Jakarta. He is working for a bank... national Indonesia subsidiary security profile, you know like um, like ATM machines and each part, each of the branches of the BNI. And then I'm the second. I work here in Australia Awards Indonesia. And my... my younger brothers, one is working for [a] local government in Batam, and another one is working for an International NGO in Banda Aceh.

Interviewer : What NGO?

Lazuardi : I can't remember the name but this is a kind of development NGO to help people in giving scholarships to orphans and orphanage in Aceh. The organizations belong to [the] Uni Emirate Arab.

Interviewer : This is because... since the tsunami?

Lazuardi : Yes. After the tsunami. They start building their networking in Aceh. After the tsunami actually.

Interviewer : So all of your family has graduated from S1 - S2 or maybe?

Lazuardi : Yes, yes, bachelor degree.

Interviewer : Tell me about your struggles in the university. Why do you choose the, what is it, economics?

Lazuardi : At the bachelor degree or in Australia?

Interviewer : First in bachelor degree.

Lazuardi : Um, I'm struggling in -- you know, I'm not that good in economics actually. Because I'm not that good in economics, in, you know, in counting, in um....

Interviewer : Senior high school?

Lazuardi : So that's why I'm, I did um... I took my bachelors degree in agriculture. But major--

Interviewer : Oh in agriculture. Not in economy, *ya*?

Lazuardi : Social economics, first.

Interviewer : Social economics.

Lazuardi : So not purely economics, but not purely agriculture. So, in between agriculture and economic. I was a bit, you know...um, I found [it] a bit hard to deal with uh, accounting... like that. But then because I know this is my weakness and then I try to manage this problem. And then I think I can manage that by at the end of the-- my graduation. Then when I did my masters degree at the university of Queensland, the first challenges that I found was that ...um, language. I did my pre-departure training here for six months. I thought that I'm good enough to to follow this study at the university. But then when went there, it is different. The way is just like you know, um, for the first two months I was there, I couldn't even know what a single word that they are saying.

Interviewer : In the class?

Lazuardi : Yes. Even outside of the university, like at the market or bus station or anything, they speak like... I have no idea what is they are talking about.

Interviewer : But you pass the-- *apa namanya, ujian*, in here *ya*, in six months? You passed the standard *ya*? Because they have different--

Lazuardi : I got 6.5 but it's not a guarantee that you can't survive for the first--

Interviewer : Because they use I think, British. And there, is Australian, local language?

Lazuardi : Yes. They have, you know, a strange--

Interviewer : Dialect?



Lazuardi : Dialect or something. But then um, that's my first problem, and then, because you know I stayed with a couple of friends from other countries as well. So we rent a house, uh, five of us. And then because I have to speak English everyday, so..

Interviewer : Not Indonesian, *ya*?

Lazuardi : I have no friends from Indonesia in my house at that moment. And then um, that... you know, this teach me how to, you know, to understand the way they speak, the way Australians speak especially Queenslander. They speak differently in English and then after about six months, um...I found myself--

Interviewer : Totally adapted?

Lazuardi : Yes. And then in the first year and then... um, I can understand every single word, what they are talking, you know, things like that. Even [if] they are just whispering something in English, I can, I can understand what they are saying. Because you know everyday you have to you have to understand, everyday they speak in English.

Interviewer : Yeah, what about your adaptation in research topics and so on in the, in the university, in the class?

Lazuardi : I did a coursework program so I didn't do any research. Um, so basically I have no problem in the, in the subject. But more to the language. And then, yes, I little bit about economics and other things. But because we are as the government scholarship, we are provided by assistance, in -- [a] kind of tutorial-- in... in... you know, in what level that we are required. Like in economics or math or everything.

Interviewer : And you could access, use, library... so no problem like that, *ya*?

Lazuardi : Yes.

Interviewer : So tell me about... how, why, why did you choose Australia and Awards and so on?

Lazuardi : Firstly simply because my dad, did his Masters degree in the University of Queensland as well.

Interviewer : Oh I see. What he got, what [was] the faculty at that time?

Lazuardi :Um, Faculty of Vet, animal science, or something.

Interviewer : Okay.

Lazuardi : He got his scholarship from local government at that time, a long time ago.

Interviewer : Aceh?

Lazuardi : Yeah.

Interviewer : Aceh. Okay.



Lazuardi : And then when I was [a] kid, my dad said that 'You have to go to the university abroad.' And because the only university I know when I was a young boy is the University of Queensland. And then, 'I just want to go there someday'. And then what was I said to my dad back then.

Interviewer : And you...uuhhh...*apa*...submit, submit? Where did you get the information about the work and scholarship?

Lazuardi : I got this from the information that [is] spread out at the University of Syah Kuala at that time.

Interviewer : Okay. So you, you got the information since you were a university student, I mean.

Lazuardi : Yes, yes. I knew about the scholarship. And then after the tsunami I heard there was another program. They called it APS at that time. Australia Partnership Scholarship. But this [is] special for...

Interviewer : Aceh.

Lazuardi : Aceh. After the tsunami and then I tried to apply for the scholarship.

Interviewer : So you use this... this program ya? Your scholarship is, is [an] Aceh program? I mean..

Lazuardi : Aceh and Nias actually.

Interviewer : Okay.

Lazuardi : The APS program was dedicated for Aceh and Nias after the tsunami at that time.

Interviewer : Okay. How many people at that time? How batch, *apa*, batch *berapa anda*?

Lazuardi : I can't remember. But the total scholarship recipients from APS program I think was about 200-something.

Interviewer : One year?

Lazuardi : No.

Interviewer : Total?

Lazuardi : Yes.

Interviewer : What is the scheme? This is the-- I mean uh, more or less than the general program, like awards, in general? The Aceh Nias is I mean more, *apa namanya, lebih besar*, the money or..

Lazuardi : No, basically the same. Only the, the total number of awardee, it's a bit different. ADS, at that time.

Interviewer : So you got the -- you got the scholarship by competition among Acehnese and Nias, *ya*?

Lazuardi : Well actually the APS program is not only um, you know I mean um, other applicants from, from other areas could also apply for that scholarship. But major, the majority of the recipients are from Aceh.



Interviewer : Okay, okay. It's not only Aceh and Nias, *ya*?

Lazuardi : Yes.

Interviewer : The name of the program is...?

Lazuardi : They don't call it Aceh-Nias, but APS is aimed to give support to people after the tsunami. The name is just Australia Partnership Scholarship.

Interviewer : *Ya*. But you--the process is the same, you have to join in English, and so on.

Lazuardi : Yes. It's exactly the same.

Interviewer : What about choose -- why do you choose the -- what is it, management and business?

Lazuardi : Um, I consulted with my... my manager at that time. Because I'm working in the area of business. Business development. Building a relationship with um, partners... with a...

Interviewer : So your position in... in [your] company at that time, *ya*?

Lazuardi : Yes. Yes. So that's why he suggested me to take a business related subject. And then I did MBA because you know MBA is a bit general in um...That's the reason why I chose MBA.

Interviewer : And why did you choose a course program, not research?

Lazuardi : Um, because [at] that time, I'm.... First of all, I didn't have any planning to do my PhD because I'm not a lecturer. So--

Interviewer : So this is how to upgrade the-- your job *ya* in your company, something like that?

Lazuardi : Mm-hm. So more-- more about..

Interviewer : Upgrade uh -- *apa namanya* -- capacity, something like that?

Lazuardi : Yes. Capacity building so I'm not thinking about doing research like for [a] lecturer. That's why I only did my coursework program.

Interviewer : And at that time you imagined that after [coming] from to Australia then you [go] back to your company? I guess, at that time?

Lazuardi : Mm-hm. But then after the, you know, new government in Aceh, you know, the re-structurization of the organization, and then you know the environment is not that good enough for building [a] career or something. And then I quit.

Interviewer : Move to what is dominated by GAM *ya*?

Lazuardi : At some point yes, but you know the way they manage the organization is not...as conducive as--



Interviewer : So you [were] coming back after the second election of Aceh after... after tsunami? I mean the first election in 2006 and then 2010.

Lazuardi : Well actually not... um... not affected by the election but simply because the you know the structure of the organization has changed. Most of it.

Interviewer : Then you [telephoned that - audio unclear, 00:26:16], and then looked for another company?

Lazuardi : Another company in IT, um, but again my position still about business development. So I'm still -- at that time I still um, managing [a] relationship with government agency but [in a] different way. What I did that time [was] just to, you know, provide IT solutions, networking solutions, so our partners [were] like Telkom, and our clients [were] like a you know the ministry of social affairs, ministry of, *ya* [a] couple of ministries here in Jakarta.

Interviewer : This is about the your daily life in Australia? It was the first time you visited Australia when you got the...

Lazuardi : Yeah.

Interviewer : Okay. How... how did you adapt, to the culture, especially. Did you get some struggles in adapting because the differences between Australia and Indonesia?

Lazuardi : Yes, yes I did. But I knew at that time I will -- I'm going to have that kind of problem in culture. But you know during our pre-departure training here in Jakarta we are prepared for that. We have to..

Interviewer : Introduce?

Lazuardi : Introduced to Australian culture. So I'm not that shock when I got there. I understand already the way hmm they behave, the way they... you know... daily life in Brisbane so...

Interviewer : What about food, for example?

Lazuardi : Yeah, food was a bit..um, because you know it's a bit hard to find halal food. Um...

Interviewer : Rice?

Lazuardi : Rice... no... because there are a couple of Chinese...

Interviewer : Supermarket and also, *ya*?

Lazuardi : Yeah. Chinatown there where rice could... Yeah, we can get rice everywhere actually.

Interviewer : And you cooked yourself or...

Lazuardi : Sometimes yes, but sometimes we just make sandwiches, and you know fast food like...like that.

Interviewer : So not uh... regularly, everyday you...?

Lazuardi : No no.

Interviewer : Because most of your time [is] in campus, *ya*?

Lazuardi : Yeah. So if I have a class in the morning and then I just make sandwiches for... for morning and afternoon. And then I attended the class. And then after that I go to the uni-- uh, to the library. I got the key [for a] special room at the library. And then sometimes I just pray in... in the library... in a room like this. Who have everything there, they have [a] computer and access internet and everything so my--

Interviewer : Cafeteria also not so far from--

Lazuardi : No, just... just downstairs if you want to get...

Interviewer : And you there is also rice in [the] cafeteria?

Lazuardi : Not really.

Interviewer : But no problem with you, *ya*?

Lazuardi : No problem. In first--

Girl's voice : How about [adaptation to season - audio unclear 00:29:44]?

Interviewer : Season, like weather..

Lazuardi : Oh, the weather in Queensland is a bit similar to Indonesia. But not as extreme as Indonesia, I think. I mean during the winter we could, you know, um, they don't have snow there. But the temperature could be five degrees...

Interviewer : Okay. Look too extreme like the middles...

Lazuardi : No, 5 to 10 sometimes 15 degrees. Yeah, so, not that extreme. And during summer it could be about 29, 30 degrees, but it's not as humid as in Jakarta. So um... [it's] easier for us to adapt to that um, weather.

Interviewer : What about the culture, for example, did you join in music together, in local culture, or a film or something.

Lazuardi : At the university we have what we call Student Union. Um, this union is -- they're trying to, you know, to combine, to every student from every college in one. Basically they invite us to show our performances like from Indonesia normally we...we perform Angklung, or Sedati, or something. And also from other countries. So this [is] where we can interact with other students from -- international students. And... and Australia as well. So, that's how we know how other cultures as well.

Interviewer : So what about Aceh? Are there many Aceh in, Acehnese in your campus or your faculty?

Lazuardi : Not that many. I remember that time when I was there. It was about four or five...

Interviewer : So you don't have didn't have a... like a... local culture of Aceh, for example, in...

Lazuardi : No, we just have Indonesia.



Interviewer : Indonesia? Ok. Because Aceh also has some, some, *apa*, special culture, like music or something. What about recreation. Did you also go to another...?

Lazuardi : Yes. Every semester break I went to other states. I went to Melbourne, Sydney, Tasmania, Adelaide, and to Canberra, because you know, it's not that far and not that expensive. Just domestic flight you can get everywhere.

Interviewer : Especially train, *ya*? Do you have another question?

Girl's voice : How about the program television maybe, when you were there?

Lazuardi : I only access Australian television that time.

Girl's voice : At that time?

Lazuardi : ABC Network, Channel 9.

Interviewer : So more news, *ya*, than -- *apa* -- culture, or film or something

Lazuardi : Not really. It depends on -- it's a bit like here in Indonesia we have TV One who focus for news, for RCTI, for example, who focus on entertainment...that also happens in Australia. But my favorite one was the Channel 9 at that time. ABC as well because [of] it's focus on the news.

Interviewer : So after coming back you went back to Aceh first and then to Jakarta?

Lazuardi : Yeah. I went back to Aceh, I joined the organization. I joined back [to] the organization. And then I -- because there was a position at the branch office here in Jakarta and then I moved to Jakarta. And then that's why I have another connection with -- to get another job in Jakarta.

Interviewer : What about the future and do you have something planned or something, move to another...

Lazuardi : Um...actually I'm looking for to enhance my... my skills and knowledge and practical thinking about business. Because what I did in Australia was about business. And I think I have a strong passion in business, a strong passion in... in... *ya*, that kind of things. So, I think for the future I'm... I'm looking forward to improve my capacity in that area.

Interviewer : So you want to be more entrepreneur or something?

Lazuardi : It could be. Um, but um, I'm looking for to, you know, to supply my skill and knowledge about business and economics in the work area. That's what I'm looking for.

Interviewer : Oh yeah, what actually [do] you do here, I mean responsible, what special responsibility do you...

Lazuardi : Um, we are taking after the alumni. So basically we manage alumni. But not only alumni...we also connect with their organization, the ministry. So basically we manage alumni and the -- alumni program. Reintegration program or to...to, you know, to bridge the gap between what they are, what they studied in Australia and their current job here at the ministry because we focus on ministries here. We call it priority organization.

Interviewer : So you are also monitoring where and move, maybe the alumni, after [studying in] Australia?

Lazuardi : Yeah. So basically we take care of -- we are looking after the awardee when they are going to study in Australia. And then we have an award team who is taking after when they are in the Australia. And when they are come back we still um, manage the relationship with alumni and their organizations. Not only alumni individually but also their organizations. We try to maintain that relationship. We try to place how they can contribute to the development, how they can apply their knowledge and skill, to network places, things like that. So what's we are doing to managing alumni actually.

Interviewer : Okay thank you very much. So your name only one ya. Lazuardi?

Lazuardi : Yes Lazuardi.

Interviewer : Thank you.

Girl's voice : Do you still contact with your friend? Queensland University? Until now?

Lazuardi : Ya. I still [keep] in touch with my classmate. Um, most of them are from Australia, and they [are] also from Chile, from France, from America, from all across the world. Vietnam, Thailand, Philippine, everywhere I contact.

Girl's voice : Using social media to contact them?

Lazuardi : Yup.

Girl's voice : Twitter? Facebook?

Lazuardi : Facebook mostly.

Interviewer : Skype?

Lazuardi : No. And also with my lecturer, I'm still in contact [with] him.

Interviewer : Oh, okay. Your... *apa namanya*, supervisor.

Lazuardi : Yeah, supervisor. My head of program, MBA program at that time, I'm still sending emails, and also saying hello.

Interviewer : They also know that you are, you are here?

Lazuardi : Mmm-hm.

Interviewer : Okay?

Girl's voice: Okay.

Interviewer : Thank you very much, *mas*.

[END] [Recording time: 00:38.56]

